

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **10/509,673**
Amendment filed March 9, 2007
Reply to OA dated December 18, 2006

REMARKS

Applicants have amended the specification to correct typographical errors and amended Claims 1 and 3 to clarify the present invention. No new matter is involved.

As now amended, Claim 1 is to a multiple-chamber medicinal container that has a container body with the multiple chambers for containing medicaments therein and a partitioning seal portion for separating the multiple chambers from one another, a medicinal outlet portion attached to the container body for discharging the medicaments from the chambers, and an additional small container formed of sheet material disposed in at least one of the multiple chambers and having a medicament enclosed therein. The partitioning seal portion is openable so as to cause the chambers to communicate with one another for use, and the partitioning seal portion is formed by bonding opposed inner wall surfaces of the container body separably. The sheet material forming the additional small container is bonded to the opposed inner wall surfaces of the container body in the vicinity of the bonded portion, and the additional small container opens along with the separation of the inner wall surfaces caused by opening the partitioning seal portion. In independent Claim 3, a similar multiple-chamber medicinal container is provided where the sheet material forming the small additional container is bonded to the inner wall surfaces within the partitioning seal portion. Such multiple-chamber medicinal containers are not taught or suggested in the prior art.

In the Office Action, Claims 1 and 5 - 15 are rejected as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) in view of Inoue et al. (U.S. 5,423,421); Claims 3 and 17 - 23 are rejected as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. 103(b) in view of Larkin (U.S. 4,602,910); Claims 1, 3, 16 and 24 are rejected as anticipated

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under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) in view of Iguchi et al. (U.S. 6,232,128); and Claims 13 and 14 are rejected as obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of a combination of the teachings of Inoue et al. and Larkin. Reconsideration and removal of these rejections are respectfully requested in view of the present amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

An important feature of the present invention resides in the structure wherein the sheet material of the additional small container is bonded to the opposed inner wall surfaces of the container body. By this structure, as shown in Fig. 2(b), the sheet material of the additional small container opens by forces F for separating the films 5a, 5b of the container 5 due to the opening of the weak seal portion 13. In order to open the additional small container, at least two forces should be applied to the additional small container. Thus, the additional small container needs to be bonded to the opposite inner wall surfaces of the container as claimed.

With respect to the Inoue et al. reference, that reference shows a container with plural medicant containing chambers, an upper small chamber 1A and lower large chamber 1B that are connected by two weak seal portions 8A and 8b. The chamber communicates when the weak seals are broken. While an outer bag or cover surrounds the small chamber 1A, there is no communication between the cover chamber contents and either of chambers 1A or 1B. Thus Inoue et al. merely shows a cover 5 surrounding the chamber 1A, which does not contain any medicament and does not communicate with either chamber 1A or 1B.

In the present claimed container, the small additional container and multiple chambers communicate with each other as shown in Fig. 2 (b). Thus the small additional container

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communicates with all multiple chambers. Such an arrangement is not possible in or taught or suggested in the cited references.

With respect to the Larkin references, the Office Action refers to multiple chambers (11 and 34), but there are no multiple chambers (1A and 1B) as in the present container, and an additional small container that communicates with the multiple chambers. Larkin merely has a single primary container (14) with an interior body (11) and a second container (34) sealed within the body section (11) by a seal area (43). As with Inoue et al., there are no multiple chambers and an additional small container that communicates with the multiple chambers when the small container is opened in accordance with the separation of the inner wall surfaces of the container body.

The Iguchi et al. reference also fails to teach or suggest the multiple-chamber container of amended Claims 1 and 3, where an additional small container is provided in at least one of multiple chambers that can communicate with each other, and where the sheet material forming the additional small container is bonded to the inner wall surfaces in the vicinity of, or within, the partitioning seal portion of the multiple-chamber medicinal container, as in the present claims.

None of the references cited nor their combination teach or suggest the present claimed structure.

In view of the present amendments to the claims and the above remarks, Claims 1, 3 and 5 - 24 are believed to be patentable and early allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

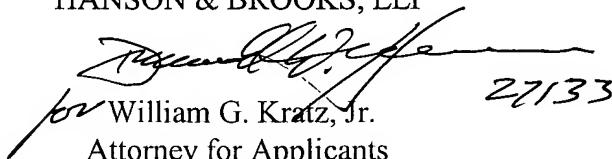
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If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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